

Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6)
Team of Specialists on Gender-Responsive Standards teleconference discussion notes and actions
7 February 2024, 12:00 CET

Item	Subject	Discussion / Action
1a	Approval of the agenda	Agenda agreed with no modifications
1b	Roll call	<p>Leadership: <u>Michelle Parkouda</u> (Chair, SCC Canada), <u>Lucy Salt</u> (Vice-Chair WorkSafe New Zealand), <u>Stephanie Eynon</u> (Vice-Chair, BSI UK)</p> <p>Secretariat: Lance Thompson (UNECE)</p> <p>Members: <u>Alena Widder</u> (VDE Germany), <u>Alyson Fick</u> (ASTM), <u>Andia Persad-Maharaj</u> (TTBS Trinidad & Tobago), <u>Grace Callahan</u> (UL-Standards), <u>Carla Gordon</u> (INEN Ecuador), <u>Charlyne Restivo</u> (ITU), <u>Claudio Lopez</u> (UNIT Uruguay), <u>Dalia Yarom</u> (SII Israel), <u>David Erazo</u> (INEN Ecuador), <u>Deborah Wautier</u> (CEN/CENELEC), <u>Dikgang Ramatlo</u> (SABS South Africa), <u>Dineo Hexana</u> (SABS South Africa), <u>Dorte Kulle</u> (DS Denmark), <u>Tete Novinyo Doumashie</u> (ATN Togo), <u>Ekaterine Labadze</u> (GEOSTM Georgia), <u>Elmira Abasbekova</u> (NISM Kyrgyzstan), <u>Emmanuel Gatera</u> (RSB Rwanda), <u>Fiona O'Donovan</u> (NSAI Ireland), <u>Florence Umwatwembi</u> (RSB Rwanda), <u>Larissa Fuentes</u> (WOCAN), <u>Grace Bolan</u> (ASME USA), <u>Haukur Logi Johannsson</u> (Standlar Iceland), <u>Joanna Gajdek</u> (ASI Austria), <u>Jovana Koricana</u> (RSS Serbia), <u>Kaspars Milasevics</u> (LVS Latvia), <u>Kostanca Dedja</u> (DPS Albania), <u>Lauren Russo</u> (Standards Australia), <u>Leon Lee Dossou</u> (ANM Benin), <u>Liz Cordero</u> (INTECO Dominican Republic), <u>Maria Cassens-Sasse</u> (PTB Germany), <u>Marianna Kramarikova</u> (IEC), <u>Mercedes Suero</u> (INDOCAL Dominica), <u>Nydiane Razafindraingy</u> (WTO), <u>Paola Travaini</u> (UNI Italy), <u>Paul Passerat</u> (AFNOR France), <u>Peter Morfee</u> (WorkSafe New Zealand), <u>Sarid Sriduandao</u> (TISI Thailand), <u>Victoria Mletzak</u> (ILNAS Luxembourg)</p> <p>Observers: <u>Alina Nica Gales</u>, <u>Anastasio Bartolome</u>, <u>Anna Chebotareva</u>, <u>Anna Komar</u>, <u>Athina Panayiotou</u>, <u>Eduardo Llano</u>, <u>Frauke Hoss</u>, <u>Jaipal Basi</u>, <u>Jennifer Bullock</u>, <u>Lise Schmidt Aagesen</u>, <u>Marius Metz</u>, <u>Meredith Shaddix</u>, <u>Natalia Ortiz de Zarate Crespo</u>, <u>Nisha Bura</u>, <u>Nor Faezah Mohamad Arif</u>, <u>Oisín Curtis</u>, <u>Stephan Kabore</u>, <u>Tushit Kamal</u></p> <p>60 participants (38 were women)</p>
2	Invited Speaker	<p><u>Ms. Frauke Hoss</u> of the European Commission DG GROW (Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs) joined the meeting to present the <i>EU 2024 Study on the inclusiveness of anthropometrics in European harmonised standards</i>.</p> <p>Most European standards for industry to design and test products are insufficiently inclusive or based on outdated data. Facial masks are tested on a mannequin of an adult male from Sheffield, England created over fifty years ago. The standard on radiation from mobile phones uses the morphology of military personnel from the United States of America in the 1980s. Crash test dummies for testing cars are based on an average man of 70 kilograms and 176 centimetres. These models may exclude women and children, but they may also exclude a good number of men who do not fit into these models either. Additionally, people change a lot from generation to generation, so that it is questionable whether 1988 is representative for today's population.</p> <p>Legislation does not define these standards. It will typically state that the product needs to be safe, that the individuals that use the product are kept safe; it will set out very high-level safety goals. Then the European Commission requests the European standardisation bodies to interpret these overarching safety rules with technical specifications. If these standards are legally sound, they will be published in the EU Official Journal. Then, as a</p>

manufacturer, it is possible to demonstrate compliance with EU legislation by applying the corresponding standard to the product. Alternatively, manufacturers have the choice to ask a testing laboratory to judge if a product fulfils the overarching requirements; but even in this case, the valid standard is still the benchmark for the safety of the product. It is unadvisable to integrate the technical requirements directly into legislation because this would need to be changed each time the state-of-the-art evolves.

The study on inclusiveness of anthropometrics in European harmonized standards started within this context. About 4000 standards supporting twenty-two pieces of legislation were screened. The approach of the Standards Council of Canada was used as the methodological basis. First, the 4000 standards were assessed to see which ones actually have something to do with humans; which is about one third. Then, six dimensions were tested, the first four of which allow to measure inclusiveness (which can be high, medium or low):

1. Anthropometric coverage, using 200 different parameters about the body down to the thickness of the ear to the width of the ear tunnel and of course height, weight and morphology
2. Statistical inclusiveness to verify if the correct statistical units were used (Did the standard consider averages when it really should have considered a range? Was a 95th percentile used when a range should have been used?)
3. Data transparency to know which anthropometric dataset has been used to develop the standard
4. Data representativeness of the underlying dataset, to know if the data is representative of the population (Did the dataset include just men? just women? specific nationalities?)

The results of the study demonstrated that around 79% of all the standards tested used all the relevant characteristics of the body, 73% at least partially used the correct statistical units. However, on data transparency, only 56% partially referenced their data source(s) and 36% did not at all. Where the underlying data was referenced, it became apparent that 76% of the analytic data was not representative for the population. This inclusiveness issue can result in death, illness and most often injuries for those morphologies not being considered. However, even if the standards stated that a product needs to be safe for 95% of the population, but we are not able to identify who that 95% sample is, then it's just pushing paper and not really ensuring that everyone is equally safe. Having a representative anthropometric dataset is essential for making products that are safe for most people.

Almost all standards analysed in the study were considered insufficiently inclusive. They need to be updated as part of the normal process of reviewing them ca. every five years. So, each time revisions are requested to update to the current state of the art, the EU Commission will request that inclusiveness is addressed. But as long as the data is not available, it will be difficult for standardisers and manufacturers to ensure safe products.

The current project is now looking for financing to collect the necessary anthropometric data, i.e., the 200 parameters (to see if perhaps some can be mathematically derived), so as to have a statistically representative dataset. An initial feasibility study to assess the options has been launched. In the meantime, a campaign to measure 1700 children in two Member States is running (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-Rgfc5fnUI>).

The European Commission supports this work fully. There may be some push back though from individuals. Most people will think that they are part of the mainstream and do not necessarily want to be considered as a "disadvantaged" group. And within the standardization world, there may be a good deal of knowledge missing. For example, a committee might put a size range for a testing mannequin into their standard and conclude that it is inclusive. However, in reality testing laboratories will still only use one mannikin, which is in that range but not representative for the whole range. When confronting some technical committees on this, they do not necessarily see that as their problem. There may also be question of historical data as well; if an engineer has decades of data based on the same measurements, a change in those measurements will interrupt the timeseries.

		<p>A question was raised on differing anthropomorphic on a national level, if we are aiming at a standard which will have global application, would it be necessary to create a different standard for each market? Within the EU, this is clearly not the objective. The EU has the same standards for the entire single market. However, there could be different sizes or shapes of a same product.</p> <p>It may be an economical question as well since there may not be a market for certain sizes; it may not be financially viable for a manufacturer. On this point, the EU legislation is currently clear, i.e., nobody should be unfairly disadvantaged. There is a risk that products will become more expensive due to the effort to make product safety more inclusive. However, technological progress could lower the costs. For example, it is perhaps not necessary to do a physical crash test to test all morphologies, ages, postures, etc. It could be possible to use computer models to test all of these; but a dummy would still be necessary so that the computer model can be calibrated and validated against real life conditions. So you would still need for example a female dummy, a male dummy and a child dummy to test the computer model. But then to test the thousands of different scenarios, a computer can be used.</p> <p>Raising awareness may be a challenge. The Declaration on Gender-Responsive Standards may have been signed by the central management, but the people in the hundreds of technical committees may not even be aware of it. These experts (even when they are women) are not necessarily experts in inclusiveness.</p> <p>It is important to underline that this work is not just about gender, but about inclusiveness; it is looking at all morphologies (tall, short, fat, slim, muscular, beards, etc.). This point is important because if you tell a man that the technical committee must consider women, he may not feel affected and may not even listen. But if tell a man that the committee must consider people of 76 kilos and of 95 kilos, then he might realize that it is partly about himself as well.</p> <p>There is also a question of cost efficiency that needs to be considered and that it may not be cost efficient to make a machine operator's booth adapted for the tiniest person on the planet. There might need to be some tough decisions at some point as it will likely be impossible to make everything possible for everyone. (For example, in the firefighting field, at some point, an individual would just be too small to be a firefighter. So, it is not cost effective to have clothing for one person that might come once in 20 years).</p>
3	Gender Action Plans and Declarations	<p>There have been no new signatories to the Declaration since the last meeting. We are still at 86 signatories.</p> <p>The secretariat underlined that the website for the Declaration had been updated to simplify how this is presented and to include the name of the gender focal points. See: https://unece.org/trade/wp6/Gender-Resp-Stdards-declaration#accordion</p> <p>ISO has submitted the survey on gender action plan repository. Its submission and the seven other submissions are available on the website at: https://unece.org/trade/wp6/GAP-repository</p>
4	Prep for 3-4 April meeting	<p>The secretariat shared information on the full Forum and the different meetings that will take place. It also provided an update on who will be presenting at the GRS conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WTO IWG on Trade and gender co-chair from El-Salvador will likely make a keynote speech. • UNECE Environment division and WTO have confirmed on the climate change. • Waiting on input from Lucy & Peter concerning climate change • Waiting on responses from Gulser Corat, the EU Commission and IEC for the gender and AI table. <p>The secretariat announced that there will be the appointment of officers during this meeting. Chair and Vice-Chairs are appointed on a yearly basis and can be renewed without restrictions; the full procedure is published on the event webpage.</p> <p>The secretariat further explained that during the 3 April meeting, we will need to review the progress on elements within the Programme of Work.</p>

5	Update from Secretariat	<p>The secretariat provided an update on the “Multilingual glossary of terms related to gender and trade”. A first draft consolidating terms that have already been used within WP.6 documents (and some additional terms used in WTO documents) was circulated to members of ToS-GRS. It is hoped to advance and finalize the English text during the month of March (and identify any additional terms that should be included), so that a near final version can be presented at the Annual Session on 3-4 April. Experts who wish to be part of this process were asked to send an email to the secretariat in order to receive an advance copy of the draft. Fiona, Florence and Oisin requested to participate.</p> <p>There were some comments to check the Glossary from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) or the ISO IWA 34:2021 (the former is a for-pay standard so cannot be taken into consideration; experts from that working group are welcome to comment into the current text).</p>
		<p><u>ToS-GRS annual session: 3-4 April</u>: https://unece.org/trade/events/wp6-third-forum <u>Next ToS-GRS meetings: 5 June, 11 Sept., and 6 Nov. 2024</u> (all 12:00-14:00 Geneva-time)</p>